



PRENTICE COMPUTER CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
ST. LUCIA
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NEWSLETTER

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1.0 NEW CHARGE RATES

It may be recalled that in the February Newsletter I mentioned that charge rates were being reviewed to reflect gains in productivity from the new computing equipment including the changed circumstances of average and marginal costs of providing various computing resources. I also foreshadowed the likely directions such restructuring in charges might take.

After review of the Centre's recommendations by the Computer Centre Management committee and the Finance Committee, the Senate at its meeting of 29.3.78 approved the following amendments to charge rates as from 1.4.79.

Item	Charge Per	1055 System		1090 System	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
		\$	\$	\$	\$
Processor time	minute	1.10	.55	6.60	3.30
Memory Space	Kwords/Min	.10	.09	.60	.54
Line Printing	page	.018	.045	.018	.045
Self-Service Printing (when installed)*	page	-	.015	-	.015

*Self-service printing will be limited initially to output on standard single part stationery of 20 pages or less per job. The charge of 1.5 cents per page will be the same for all priorities. The self-service facility will be installed as quickly as accommodation and technical constraints will allow. Until the availability of self-service printing, Senate has approved that a rate of 1.8 times the current rate (e.g. 1.62 cents per page for low priority printing) will apply to output of 20 pages or less per job.

The impact is that overall charges will be reduced around 12% (10% for Administration and 14% for Teaching and Research). Significantly, reductions in the growth area of terminal use will be in excess of 20%. These charge reductions together with those made in 1978 now give users 30% to 40% more computer time for the same money as in 1977.

The overall reductions in pricing will be passed on to other educational users and therefore the charging factor for other educational users will remain unchanged at 1.5 times the base rate.

1.1 External Users - New Charge Rates

The internal charge rate is adjusted for a variety of factors and in the period of adjustment of demand following reductions of prices, there is some shortfall of revenue involving temporary subsidy. For this reason the policy we have adopted is to adjust the external charge factor to provide approximately the same overall costs. Thus, despite inflationary growth the charges to external users have been kept fairly constant for a number of years. The current charging factor of 2.7 will be adjusted to 3.0 times the internal rate as from 1.4.79.

Nevertheless we would like to pass on our long term gains in productivity to external users who intend to make more than casual use of the system in the future. For this reason we would be prepared to negotiate contracts of three to five years. Please let me know if you would like to discuss longer term charging options.

Director
extension 2189

2.0 SYSTEMS AVAILABILITY ON SUNDAYS AT QUARTER RATE

Previous attempts to provide a weekend service have been disappointing. Nevertheless circumstances have changed and, following discussions with the Vice-Chancellor, it would seem worthwhile to have another trial.

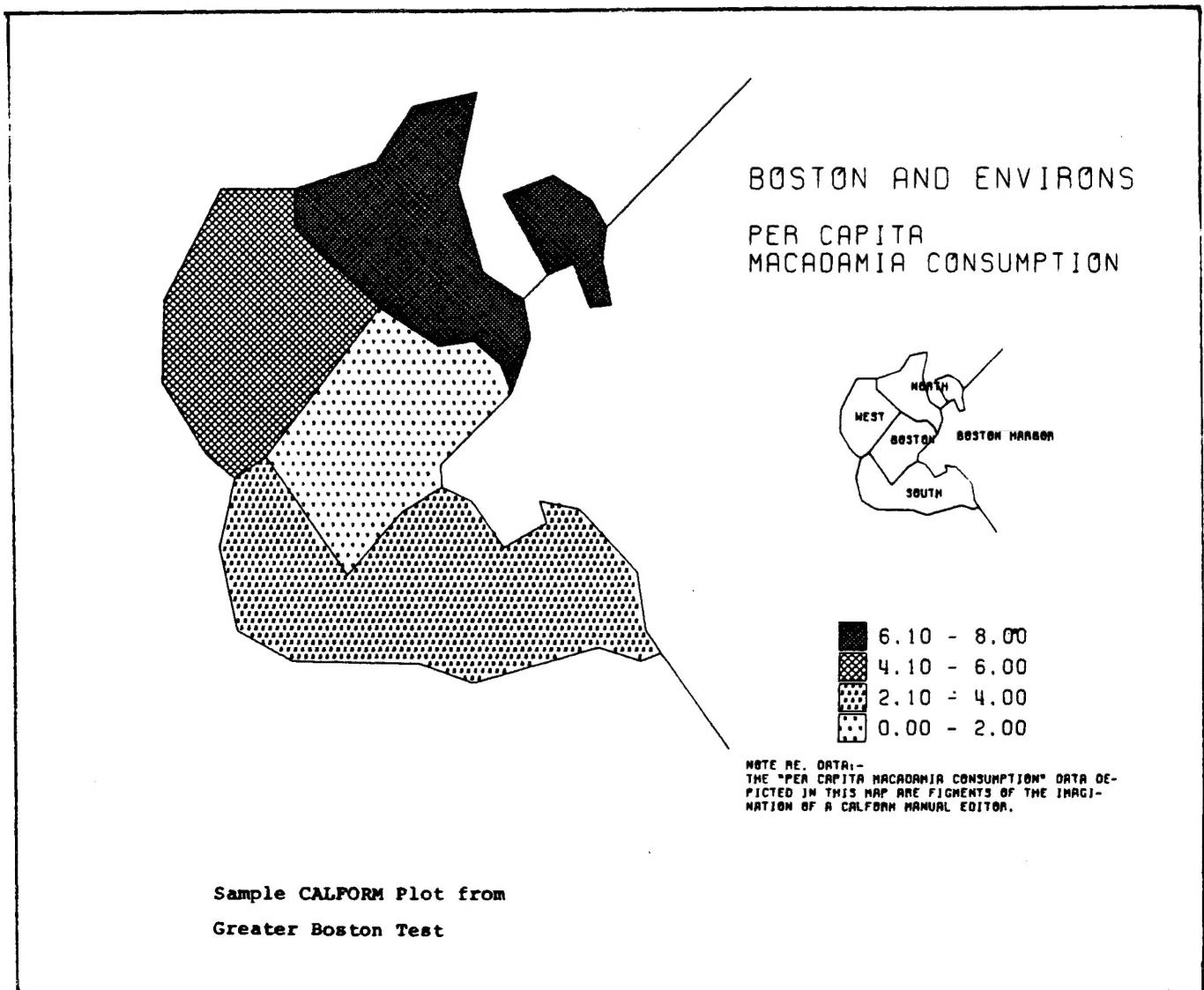
The system will be available at quarter rate for terminal users between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm each Sunday from ~~15/4~~ April. The system will run 'unattended' and there will be no operators on duty so there will be no mounts of magnetic tapes or disks and no printing (later in the year it is planned to provide a self-service printer). Files queued for printing will be processed on Monday at the appropriate priority rate. The core limit will be 100K. A programming consultant will be on duty to assist academic staff and post-graduate students with problems they may have. Although the systems are now reasonably reliable it should be noted that there will be no engineering staff on duty and should there be hardware problems the system would be closed down for the remainder of the day.

Director
extension 2189

3.0 NEW VERSION OF CALFORM

CALFORM is a computer plotting program for producing shaded, conformant maps. A "conformant" map depicts a study area which has been divided into a number of data zones. The data values assigned to each zone are represented by symbolism appearing as a grey scale shading.

For example, the following is a map produced by CALFORM showing distribution of per capita macadamia nut consumption in Boston.



An earlier version of CALFORM has been available for some time on the Centre's KA/KL systems. Now a new version is available to the Centre which is much enhanced.

New facilities include :-

- Users may preview maps on a storage CRT (eg, the TEKTRONIX 4014) prior to producing a plot,
- an improved shading algorithm,
- new framing ability,
- quicker sorting facilities and better error recovery,
- a rewritten User Reference Manual.

If there is sufficient interest from users we will purchase the new version, otherwise we will leave the existing version on the system.

Would any interested users please contact Arthur Hartwig on extension 3021 or myself on extension 3016.

John Barker
extension 3016

4.0 EXTENDED FILE PROTECTION FACILITY

A facility exists through the use of "File Daemon" to provide file access control with a greater flexibility than the conventional protection code allows.

Details of this scheme are given in the File Daemon help file HLP:FILDAE.HLP.

Invoking these procedures cause additional overheads and are not recommended except where absolutely necessary because they also may inhibit routine system procedures such as backup and file restoration and if used incautiously may cause batch, printing and MIC procedures to fail.

W. Gout
extension 3023

5.0 ITEMS FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE

As a service to our readers we would be agreeable to placing advertisements in the Newsletter on behalf of any users who wish to dispose of or acquire computing equipment, software, etc.

Intending advertisers will have to provide details of the items, the person to contact, telephone numbers, price, etc. The Centre will not take part in any transactions or act as agents, we merely offer space in the Newsletter. If you wish to place an advertisement, type it as briefly as possible and send it to Gail Janke at the Computer Centre.

Please contact me for further information.

John Barker
extension 3016.

